

# LAND AT BRAYS LANE, ROCHFORD



## DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

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**Project details**

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Project name **Land at Brays Lane, Rochford**

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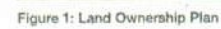
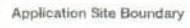
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Section 1 Introduction	PAGE 1	Figure 1: Land Ownership Plan	PAGE 1	Figure 16: Illustrative Master Plan - Residential Element	PAGE 19
Section 2 Assessment	PAGE 3	Figure 2: Site Location and Movement Network Plan	PAGE 3	Figure 17: Master Plan Overview and Perspectives	PAGE 21
Section 3 Involvement	PAGE 13	Figure 3: Facilities and Services Plan	PAGE 5	Figure 18: Typical Dwelling Sketch	PAGE 23
Section 4 Evaluation	PAGE 15	Figure 4: Broad Landscape Context Plan	PAGE 7	Figure 19: Appearance and Materials Montage	PAGE 24
Section 5 Design	PAGE 17	Figure 5: Site and Immediate Context Plan	PAGE 8	Figure 20: Typical Street Elevation	PAGE 24
Section 6 Access	PAGE 29	Figure 6: Core Strategy Key Diagram	PAGE 10	Figure 21: Landscape Plan	PAGE 25
Section 7 Conclusion	PAGE 33	Figure 7: Extract from Site Allocations DPD	PAGE 11	Figure 22: Illustrative Landscape Treatment Examples	PAGE 26
		Figure 8: Location of Sites Identified for Development during the 'Call for Sites' Process	PAGE 11	Figure 23: SUDS Strategy Plan	PAGE 27
		Figure 9: Consideration of the Sites Identified through the 'Call for Sites' Process against Key Criteria	PAGE 11	Figure 24: Phase 1 Habitat Survey Plan	PAGE 28
		Figure 10: Public Consultation Leaflet	PAGE 13	Figure 25: Junction Options and Bus Drop-off	PAGE 29
		Figure 11: Public Consultation Photos	PAGE 14	Figure 26: Access and Movement Plan	PAGE 30
		Figure 12: Public Consultation Boards	PAGE 14	Figure 27: Streets and Parking Plan	PAGE 31
		Figure 13: Opportunities and Constraints Plan	PAGE 15		
		Figure 14: Concept Plan	PAGE 17		
		Figure 15: Illustrative Master Plan - School Expansion Element	PAGE 18		



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### The Application

This Design and Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared in support of an outline planning application in respect of land to the south of Brays Lane, Rochford. The application proposes:

"Residential development of up to 100 dwellings, new access and bus turning area for the King Edmund School, reserve land for the School associated infrastructure and landscaping."

The planning application has been prepared by a team of consultants and a number of supporting documents have been prepared to support the application. These documents are listed on page 1 of the Planning Supporting Statement.

The plan opposite shows the boundary of the application site (red line) and also the land in wider ownership of the applicants (blue line). The application proposal relates primarily to the parcel of land directly to the north of The King Edmund School but also the land to the east of the school at the end of Oxford Road.

### Purpose of the Document

This statement has been prepared in accordance with Section 42 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and guidance set out within Circular 01/2008, "Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System", prepared by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

The document provides information to explain and understand the proposals, demonstrates the decision making process used to help develop them and the reasoning behind key decisions that have shaped the proposed development.

Section 2 of this statement provides an assessment and appraisal of the site's context and the steps taken to understand that context. Section 3 identifies how the local council, local people and specialist advisors have been included in the decision making process. Section 4 summarises the opportunities and constraints offered by the site. Section 5 explains the design concepts that have been applied to particular aspects of the proposal, informed by the information gained through the earlier processes. Section 6 considers vehicular access and transport links and also inclusive access. Section 7 provides a summary and conclusion.

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Figure 2: Site Location and Movement Network Plan



### Location and Land Use

The site is located to the north of Rochford, a small settlement close to Southend-on-Sea. The site falls within the Hawkwell South Ward as has an area of approximately 5.45ha.

### The Application Site (Northern Parcel)

The application site is roughly square in shape, measures approximately 5.43ha and slopes very gently downwards from north to south. It is divided into three pieces; two paddocks make up the bulk of this, separated by a narrow line of planting and a fence. The final parcel on the eastern side contains buildings and hardstanding that make up a farm complex.

The northern boundary is lined by trees, dense undergrowth and a ditch with telegraph poles and lines running parallel. The eastern edge is defined by a residential plot to the north and an agricultural field to the south. Further east are more residential and farm plots with paddocks. The southern boundary of the site is defined by a thick line of trees and hedgerow planting. Adjacent to this are the buildings of The King Edmund School with associated car parking and sports uses. The western boundary abuts existing residential development. This edge is lined by mature vegetation and rear garden fences.

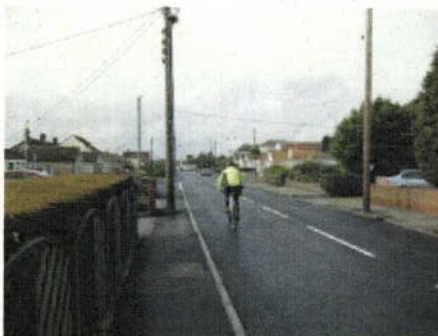
### Eastern Parcel

The application also relates to another part of land which falls outside the application site, which is referred to in this report as the eastern parcel. It is roughly square in shape, measures approximately 2.16ha and is reasonably flat. The site is currently used for agricultural purposes.

The northern boundary is lined by irregular planting and abuts an orchard and a small field, both of which are located to the rear of private plots. The eastern edge is defined by a tall continuous hedge with more agricultural land (within the applicant's ownership) sitting behind it. The southern boundary and lower half of the western boundary runs through the agricultural land and is not marked by any physical feature. The upper half of the western boundary abuts the existing playing fields of The King Edmund School which is marked by a fence.

### Movement Network

The application site is defined at the top by Brays Lane (see below). This is a fairly narrow and straight road which runs from east to west and offers no footpaths along the site boundary edge. Speeding traffic appears to be an issue as there are strips of red traffic calming surface in place and 30mph limit signs located in several places along this road. The road appears to be fairly well used, by cyclists as well as cars.



To the east, Brays Lane provides access to a network of country roads serving small pockets of development. To the west it serves some residential development before meeting Ashingdon Road. This is the main north-south distributor road running through the centre of Rochford and acts as the primary access road to most of the residential areas in the settlement. To the north it ultimately leads to Hockley, Hullbridge and the A150. Immediately to the south it leads to Rochford town centre and the railway station. Further south is London Southend Airport, Southend-on-Sea and the A127, providing access to the M25.

There are no Public Rights of Way across the site. Due to the orientation of built form along the western side of the Brays Lane site, access for pedestrians into existing residential areas is not possible at present. The boundary with the school as well as other privately owned plots adjacent to this part of site also limits connectivity.

To the south of The King Edmund School is Oxford Road which is heavily used by traffic associated with the school. At the end of the road is agricultural land owned by the applicant where the eastern part of the site is located. Easy access to this parcel would be possible from the end of Oxford Road. This part of the site also shares a boundary with the school offering easy access from the school into the site.

Public Rights of Way in close proximity to the site do provide alternative routes to local facilities and neighbouring settlements; footpaths to the east lead to southern parts of Rochford whereas routes to the west provide short-cuts to Hockley and Hawkwell.

There is a shared footpath and cycleway to the south of the site along Ashingdon Road. This runs along the western side, separated from the road by a verge. This stretch terminates but continues on the opposite side and almost travels the length of Ashingdon Road in the direction of the town centre.

Bus stops are located at regular intervals along Ashingdon Road including stops at the junction with Brays Lane. The stops are less than 300m from the site (about 3 minutes walk). The main service stopping here is the no. 7 which travels between Rayleigh and Shoeburyness via Rochford (railway station and town centre reached in 4 minutes) and Southend Central (less than half an hour). It is operated by Arriva and has a frequency of every 10 minutes. Other services include the no. 18 (Hockley to Leigh-on-Sea operated by Arriva) and the no. 20X (Rochford to Rayleigh operated by Stephenson of Essex).

Rochford Railway Station is managed by National Express East Anglia and is on the Southend Victoria to London Liverpool Street line. Services run every 15-20 minutes and will reach Southend in 6 minutes and Liverpool Street in less than an hour.



Figure 3: Facilities and Services Plan



### Facilities and Services

The site is located in close proximity to many valuable amenities, all within walking distance. Golden Cross Shops is a parade of shops located on the western side of Ashington Road (see below). This includes a cafe, chip shop, hardware store, off-licence, bakery, newsagents, pharmacy and Sumerfield supermarket. This local centre is less than 500m from the site along Brays Lane. This is a 5 minute walk although a bus can be caught from opposite Brays Lane to a stop directly outside of the parade. There is limited parking available.



Directly south along Ashington Road is another cluster of shops that include a hairdresser, veterinary surgery, dry cleaners and bookmakers. Further south is a DIY store and a car parts and accessories shop.

For a wider range of services, Rochford town centre is 1.5 miles (2.4km) away from the site and is only a 4 minute bus ride away. Alternatively it could be walked to in less than half an hour. This established shopping centre includes banks, cafes, chemists, doctor's surgery, library, pubs, restaurants and takeaways. Rochford also has a hospital for the mentally ill in the town centre.

The southern end of the Brays Lane site abuts The King Edmund School. This is a comprehensive school that accepts an age range of 11-19 years and has around 1,550 students. It specialises in Business and Enterprise. Other schools close to the site include Hoff Farm Infant and Junior Schools and St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, both on Ashington Road and Waterman Primary School to the south. Wishing Well Day Nursery is located adjacent to the latter.

Places of Worship in close proximity to the site include Elm Pentecostal Church, Hawkwell Baptist Church and St Teresa's Catholic Church. Other Places of Worship are located in the town centre.

The site is located close to many sports and leisure facilities. The King Edmund School offers its outdoor all-weather pitch, sports hall and swimming pool for public hire. There are also football pitches available at the King George Playing Field near to Canewdon View Road and Rochford Recreation Ground close to Waterman Primary School.

To the east of the site along Brays Lane is Ballards Gore Golf and Country Club which offers an 18 hole, championship length course along with practice facilities. To the west of the town is Rochford Hundred Golf Club.

Opportunities exist for leisure walking in close proximity to the site. To the east, networks of footpaths lead through the countryside passing sights such as Little Stambidge Hall and Doggetts Fishing Lake. Further to the east is marshland. Walking to the south will eventually lead to Paglesham Reach, a tributary of the River Roach. To the west, Magnolia Nature Reserve is accessible via various rights of way including the Roach Valley Way which is a 23 mile circular walk. This also leads to Hockley Woods further west.

### Urban Character

The Brays Lane site abuts residential development which defines the eastern edge of Rochford. The only built development on this part of the site consists of buildings and hardstanding of the farm complex on the eastern side. On approach to Rochford, from the east along Brays Lane, there are plots of development present. These are mainly large houses and farm buildings; some are set back less than 10m from Brays Lane. This cluster of buildings marks the entrance into Rochford from the east.

The general street pattern of Rochford is very much influenced by the north-south orientation of Ashington Road. The bulk of residential development is located to the west of this road, served via an array of east-west orientated streets. Many of these are long cul-de-sac with pedestrian connections at the end. This pattern generates blocks that are nearly 500m long and 100m wide in places. This type of urban grain is not ideal in terms of permeability although it does provide a lot of housing with south facing garages.

The majority of houses to the east of Ashington Road, some of which about the site boundary, are also linear in form although the roads and block lengths are orientated north-south. This is with the exception of Canewdon View Road and Oxford Road which are perpendicular to these areas and appear to 'book-end' this stretch of development. These streets also help to contain the site and minimise views from the north and south.

This linear style of development appears to be prominent at the northern and southern ends of Ashington Road although there appears to be a large area to the west of Canewdon View Road that has a different urban form; this infill development is based on loops and shorter cul-de-sac with a more organic and curved layout.

The areas of housing in proximity to the site were built in the style of the time. Dwellings are detached or semi-detached (with more terraced forms in the 'organic' infill areas) and vary between one and two storeys in height. In particular, the majority of dwelling types adjacent to the site are bungalows whose rear gardens abut the boundary of the Brays Lane site. Bungalows also line both sides of Oxford Road. Plots are predominantly long and thin, some are up to 70m in length. These areas of housing are therefore very low density and range between 15 to 20 dwellings per hectare, lower than the current national minimum.

In contrast, there are some small, infill areas that have been built in recent years in an 'Essex Design Guide' style and are of a relatively high density. One such scheme is located to the north of the site. The houses here are set closer together in smaller plots, the streets are adequately enclosed and the open space and landscaping is well integrated. The density is approximately 30 dwellings per hectare. However, compared to the low key impact of the older housing areas, this scheme is visually very prominent considering its location on the edge of the settlement on higher ground.

The majority of street scenes in the area are dominated by car parking and telegraph poles and their lines. Most houses have decent sized front gardens although many have been turned into hard-surface parking areas. With a combination of some low building heights and wide roads, the area suffers with few streets enclosed adequately and a lot of visual clutter in the street scene.

This clutter is increased on refuse and recycling collection day. With no provision for storage at the front of the property bins are left out on the pavement, often in groups of seven or eight. This not only blocks the footpath for pedestrians but also looks very untidy.

This is unfortunate, as some front boundary treatments in the area are quite varied and interesting, ranging from low clipped hedges, railings and decorative brick walls and timber fences. The edge treatment along Brays Lane is particularly attractive (see below) with some properties combining the mix of treatments with trees, bushes and shrubs to help create a varied but well defined edge to the street.



Building types tend to vary from plot to plot with a real mix of features: gable end (some at right angles to the street) and hipped roofs, roof dormers, chimneys, dropped eaves, bay windows, balconies and porches. The door and window arrangements are also varied. Materials include brick and render of different colours, glass and timber features and concrete or clay roof tiles. Parking is provided in garages (integral and detached), on-plot and on-street.



### Landscape Character

A preliminary appraisal of potential landscape and visual impact issues has been undertaken and is presented separately. This was prepared in advance of the latest iteration of the proposed layout and its findings informed this design work. This report utilises established landscape and visual impact methods to analyse the real experiential context of the land and considers if development in the land south of Brays Lane would be disproportionately harmful.

The site is generally square in shape consisting of two paddock fields, and to the east a collection of farm sheds, there is only insignificant bramble type vegetation and one small tree on the border between the two paddocks and otherwise the site is featureless. The northern boundary is formed by the Brays Lane roadside hedge, though in this case there is no ditch. It is a poorly managed field hedge with and no significant trees. The eastern aspect is enclosed by the Great Brays development and associated trees and mature vegetation. At present a rather ramshackle collection of farmyard sheds forms this edge. Though this may form part of the redevelopment area. Beyond this the Great Brays area continues with a pair of semi detached properties for the northern part of this aspect. The rest of Great Brays is a mix of enclosed paddock, extended gardens and woodland plantation associated with individual Great Brays properties.

The southern boundary is formed by a tall field hedge perimeter to the King Edmund School. This boundary has a good number of mature tree specimens. The western boundary is formed by a broad field hedge alongside another portion of Ashington's residential edge. Here the properties are all bungalows backing on or side on to the boundary with the site. They are properties accessed by Spencer Gardens and Hilary Close. The context is therefore not a highly valued landscape, though it may be appreciated locally due to the general density of urban development in south Essex. The site is also not a valued landscape and is highly influenced by its urban edge location.



The potential visual influences of the proposed development are quite easily defined and are limited by the nature of the landscape and accessibility to vantage points. The parcel is only likely to be visible from the King Edmund School, immediately adjacent residential properties in Ashington and Great Brays, and users of Brays Lane as they pass by. There may also be some minimal oblique views from nearby countryside to the north-east.



Figure 4: Broad Landscape Context Plan

#### KEY



High Ground



Public Rights of Way



Urban Areas Excluded from Green Belt



Approximate Zone of Visual Influence of Site

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Impacts on the landscape amenities of the location are likely to be limited as the site does not offer a notable contribution to the character of the area and has little relationship with the outlying countryside. What views there are from the urban edge are unremarkable, generally truncated at close range by the Great Brays properties and not of great value or significance to the setting of the town.

Due to the surrounding layout, impacts on visual amenities from the outlying countryside are very limited. In fact the narrow angle of view where there may be some sight of the northern edge of the development is not publicly accessible. Development would not bring about a significant material change in the composition of the views from Hyde Wood Lane.



Assessment of potential impacts on the Green Belt also has a favourable baseline. This land is not important for the prevention of coalescence, is not significant in any distinctive aspect of the setting or character of Ashington. It is not important for countryside access or recreation, and is not particularly attractive countryside. It is also the case that the constrained visual influences prevent there being any significant impact on adjacent Green Belt land.

The success of this scheme in landscape terms is not likely to be about controlling potential harm to existing resources. It will be more about good design delivering an attractive environment for a new community. The scheme will result in an enhanced planting treatment fronting onto Brays Lane. Here tree and hedge planting will provide an attractive corridor into the settlement and green frontage to the development. Although the site is generally well screened additional planting will further enhance the surrounding planting, ensuring that a good relationship is formed to the edge of the Great Brays properties and that existing trees along this boundary are given enough space to avoid conflicts with the development.



Figure 5: Site and Immediate Context Plan

### Social and Economic Profile

Based on 2001 census statistics, the proportions of the local population in each health category (good, fairly good, not good and people with a long-term illness) is broadly similar to the figures for the District and England. With regard to the age classifications, the younger age groups (up to 39 years old) are lower than the national average and the older age groups (40 years old upwards) are higher than the national average and also slightly higher than the figures for the District. Therefore, the ageing population is noteworthy in the local area and this has an impact on other indicators such as the number of retired people and houses owned outright.

With regard to distance travelled to work, 10.1% people travel less than 2km, 15% people travel between 2km and 5km and 28% people travel 5km to 10km. These percentages are similar to the percentages for the District, but lower than the national average for trips within 5km. In terms of modes of travel to work, the statistics for the local area are similar to the District as a whole. There is some variation between the local trips and the national average, with trips by train at 8.8% being significantly higher than the national average, with trips on foot at 2.7% being considerably lower than the national average.

### Health Impact Assessment

A Health Impact Assessment has been prepared to accompany the outline application on land to the north and south of Brays Lane, Rochford.

### Existing Healthcare Provision

Healthcare in the Rochford area is provided by NHS South East Essex, which is responsible for managing almost the entire NHS budget for healthcare in Castle Point, Rochford and Southend. In terms of GP practices, the Rochford/Ashingdon area is served by four practices, all of which are currently taking new patients. The only dental practice in the area is relatively large, but not accepting new patients at present. However, other dental surgeries just outside Rochford/Ashingdon are accepting new fee paying and charge exempt patients and also provide urgent dental access slots.

The South East Essex area is well served by pharmacies with three local pharmacies within the Rochford/Ashingdon area, including one located within 500m of the site. There is one optician within the Rochford/Ashingdon area, with a number of opticians in the wider area in towns such as Heckley, Southend and Westcliff-on-Sea.

Therefore, it is considered the healthcare provision in the area is adequate. The proposed development is not sufficiently large to warrant an additional GP or dentist facility on site, particularly given the surplus capacity at all four of the current GP surgeries and the availability of dentistry in the surrounding area.

### Impacts of the Proposed Development on Health

Any new development has the potential to impact upon health of new and existing residents, during the construction phase and the occupation phase. When a detailed design is prepared for this site, consideration should be given to optimising opportunities for improved health (such as linked footways/cycleways which encourage exercise) and minimising/mitigating any potential negative impacts.



## Planning Policy Context

This section of the statement sets out a summary of the national, regional and local planning policy, which are relevant to the proposed development.

### National Planning Policy

A number of the Planning Policy Statements and Guidance Notes are of relevance to the application proposals. These include:

- PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development;
- PPG2: Green Belts;
- PPS3: Housing;
- PPS12: Local Spatial Planning; and
- PPG13: Transport.

Other national policy and guidance documents include:

- The Planning System: General Principles;
- Development Management: Proactive planning from pre-application to delivery (consultation document published in December 2009); and
- Practice Guidance produced by DCLG in respect of Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments.

### Regional Planning Policy

Although the East of England Plan (EEP) is due to be abolished, it currently forms part of the statutory development plan. The EEP identifies that the District of Rochford should provide a minimum of 4,800 dwellings during the plan period (2001-21) of which, at April 2009, 3,790 were still to be built (i.e. 250 per annum).

## Core Strategy

The Council's Core Strategy (CS) is at a relatively advance stage in the preparation process, with an independent examination carried out in 2010 to 2011 and the Inspector's Report anticipated shortly.

Policy H1 of the submitted (CS) recognises that the RSS housing requirements cannot be accommodated just through the redevelopment of appropriate previously developed land and therefore extensions to residential envelopes will be required. In fact only 2005 units of the 4,750 units required between 2005 and 2025 can be accommodated on such sites, leaving a significant requirement amounting to 2,745 dwellings on Greenfield land.

Policy H2 identifies seven locations (shown on the Key Diagram below) for new residential development adjoining the existing urban areas. "East Ashington" is shown as coming forward in the period 2011 to 2015 and accommodating 100 dwellings.

Policy CLT3 (Secondary Education) is of direct relevance to the application site. This policy states that "as part of new development coming forward in Ashington, the Council will require that 3 hectares of land be reserved for the expansion of King Edmund School. In addition, new development in East Ashington will incorporate a new, improved access to King Edmund School."

A number of other policies contained within the Core Strategy are of relevance to the proposals. See Planning Statement for more details.

A schedule of proposed changes to the Core Strategy were produced by the Council in November 2010. These were subject to consultation and the changes and representations received were then sent to the Inspector.



Figure 6: Core Strategy Key Diagram

The proposed key change affecting this planning application was the use of maximum rather than minimum housing figures. The document also proposed that number of dwellings per annum should be reduced from 150 to 90.

As the inspectors report is outstanding, it is not known whether the changes will be accepted.

### Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD)

The Allocations DPD is at a relatively early stage in the preparation process. This document identifies options for the allocations set out in the Core Strategy. The allocation known as East Ashington, is identified as required for:

- 100 dwellings;
- Land made available for expansion of King Edmund School;
- Improved Access to King Edmund School;
- Public Open Space;
- Play Space; and
- Youth and Community Facilities.

Three options are identified for this allocation, which do not examine alternative quantum, but do consider alternative site areas. These options are as follows:

- EA1: Land to the south of Brays Lane
- EA2: Land to the north of Brays Lane
- EA3: Land to the north and south of Brays Lane

### Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2009

The Council's SHLAA is a key document that forms part of their evidence base. It identifies the land to the north and south of Brays Lane and states that these sites would have a capacity of 200 and 80 units respectively, if they were allocated.

The SHLAA concludes that there is an adequate 5, 10 and 15 year supply of land to meet the District's housing requirement.

### Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2009-2010

Over the last few years, completions have been below target at 169 (2007/08), 102 (2008/2009) and 86 (2009-2010). In spite of this, the Council predicts in its AMR that it has a sufficient supply to meet the five year housing requirements either based on RSS requirements (260 dwellings per annum) or "local housing requirements" (190 dwellings per annum) with a heavy reliance on Greenfield sites that have been identified in the Core Strategy.

The SHLAA identifies a need for 131 affordable dwellings per year. However there were 14 net affordable housing completions in 2009-10 and -1 net completions for the previous year (2008-2009).



## Alternative Sites Assessment

## 100 Dwellings at East Ashington

Policy H2 of the Submission Core Strategy identifies that 100 dwellings should be provided within the East Ashington broad location. The 'Call for Sites' identifies a number of sites within East Ashington for residential development. These sites are shown on the plan to the right and considered in the table (Fig 9). It is clear that the sites further north (i.e. 57, 58, 59, 62, 76 and 103) are less suitable as they cannot provide a new school access or reserve land for the school in an appropriate location and therefore do not comply with Policy CLT3. The majority of the sites are not of a sufficient size in order to accommodate the 100 units and therefore these sites (57, 58, 59 and 62) would also fail to comply with Policy H2. Many of the sites to the north are also less well related to the built up area and have limited opportunities for creating a defensible Green Belt boundary, due to limited site size and also their shape in relation to the adjoining built development.

Site 55 also fails to meet all of the criteria identified above because at 2.25 hectares it is insufficient in size to accommodate 100 units. Furthermore a site of this size could not accommodate the reserve land for the school.

Therefore, in terms of the various options available for 100 units in East Ashington, the only possible sites fall within sites 55 and 56, which comprise a number of parcels. Within those parcels there are three main options which are broadly identified in the Site Allocations DPD as sites EA1 to EA3 as shown on the plan below these options are considered on page 12.



Figure 7: Extract from Site Allocations DPD



Figure 8: Location of Sites Identified for development during the 'Call for Sites' Process

Site name (and 'Call for Sites' reference)	Sufficient size to accommodate 100 units in accordance with Policy H2	Able to create a new school access in accordance with Policy CLT3	Able to accommodate reserve land for the school in an appropriate location in accordance with Policy CLT3	Relates well to the built up area	Ability to create a defensible Green Belt boundary
Land at Brays Lane, Ashington (55)	x	✓	x	✓	x
Land north and east of Rochford town centre (56)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Land east of Highcliff Crescent, Ashington (57)	x	x	x	✓	x
Land on the south side of Canewdon View Road, Ashington (58)	x	x	x	x	x
Land on the south side of Canewdon View Road, Ashington (59)	x	x	x	✓	x
Land on the north side of Canewdon View Road, Ashington (62)	x	x	x	x	x
Land south of King George's Field, Ashington (76)	✓	x	x	x	x
Land at Newton Hall Gardens, Ashington (103)	✓	x	x	✓	✓

Figure 9: Consideration of the Sites Identified through the 'Call for Sites' Process against Key Criteria



Option 1: To the south of Brays Lane (in accordance with option EA1)

+	Site relates well to the existing built up area and does not require the creation of a defensible boundary.
+	Site has ability to accommodate a new school access in accordance with policy CLT3.
+/-	Although the site would only have the ability to accommodate some of the reserve land for the future use of the school, this would still accord with policy CLT3 as the policy does not require all of the reserve land to be provided via the development of this broad location. The remainder of the reserve land can still be provided elsewhere in connection with future development at the South East Ashington broad location.

Option 2: To the north of Brays Lane (in accordance with option EA2)

+/-	Site relates well to the existing built up area, although would result an anomaly with the land to the south of Brays Lane undeveloped whilst surrounded by built development.
-	Site does not have the ability to enable a new school access and therefore would fail to comply with Policy CLT3.
-	Whilst this site could accommodate some/all of the reserve land for the school (depending on the size of the site) it would be divorced from the school grounds.

Option 3: To the north and south of Brays Lane (in accordance with option EA3)

+	Site relates well to the existing built up area.
+	Site has the ability to accommodate the new school access in accordance with Policy CLT3.
+	Site has the ability to accommodate all or some of the reserve school land adjoining the existing school site in accordance with Policy CLT3.

Option 2 is the least desirable location for the residential development for the reasons stated above. Option 1 has the advantage over option 3 in that development is kept to the south of Brays Lane, which is recognised by the Council as being an important landscape consideration. Having said that, the land to the north of Brays Lane is screened to some extent (particularly the southern part of the site) and provides an opportunity to enhance the urban edge and also to provide a landscape buffer. Therefore the lack of a natural boundary along the northern edge of this site is certainly not an insurmountable constraint. Option 1 cannot accommodate all three hectares of reserve land along with the residential development as the parcel of land to the south of Brays Lane is too small. However, this can be overcome by locating some/all of the reserve land elsewhere, but within an accessible distance of the school.

Based on the assessment above, it is our view that the 100 dwellings at East Ashington should be located either entirely or in part to the south of Brays Lane. Given the requirement for 3 hectares of reserve school land in close proximity to the school, it is inevitable that the residential development will either extend north of Brays Lane so that the reserve land can be accommodated here or some/all of the reserve land will need to be accommodated elsewhere. Both options have merit.

### Expansion of King Edmund School

In terms of the various options available for the 3ha of reserve land for the school, these are broadly identified within the Site Allocations DPD at KES1 to KES3.

It should be noted that Policy CLT3 requires the proposals at East Ashington to incorporate a new school access, whereas the reserve land is required to come forward as part of the development in Ashington. Since 500 dwellings are proposed at South East Ashington, it is fair to assume that either/both of these residential developments could bring forward the reserve land.

Option 1: To the east of Oxford Road (in accordance with option KES1)

+	There is sufficient land (within our clients' ownership) to accommodate the reserve land in this location.
+/-	This site can not incorporate the new school access. However, the access could still be provided as part of residential development to the south of Brays Lane.
+/-	Although it adjoins the school, this site is some distance away from the main school buildings and therefore would not be suitable for core elements, such as new buildings. However, playing pitches could be accommodated in this location and they could be accessed from the school grounds and ECC and KES have confirmed that this location would be suitable for sports pitches. If land is required for new buildings/car parking this could still be accommodated to the north of the school.

Option 2: To the north of King Edmund School (in accordance with option KES2)

+	There is sufficient land (within our clients' ownership) to accommodate the reserve land in this location.
+	This site can accommodate the school access.
+	The site is well related to the school.
-	Providing 3ha of reserve land in this location would mean that the 100 units could not be delivered south of Brays Lane. It is unlikely that delivering a reduced residential scheme would be viable, given the significant contribution towards the school and other costs, nor would it meet the objectives of the emerging Core Strategy. To deliver 100 units, this would result in development to the north of Brays Lane.

Option 3: To the north of King Edmund School extending to Brays Lane (in accordance with option KES3)

+	There is sufficient land (within our clients' ownership) to accommodate the reserve land in this location.
+	This site can accommodate the school access.
+	The site is well related to the school.
-	Providing 3ha of reserve land in this location would mean that the 100 units could not be delivered south of Brays Lane. It is unlikely that delivering a reduced residential scheme would be viable, given the significant contribution towards the school and other costs, nor would it meet the objectives of the emerging Core Strategy. To deliver 100 units, this would result in development to the north of Brays Lane.

It is our view that all three options have merit as they all provide additional land for the school, which adjoins the existing school boundary. Whilst Option 1 has its disadvantages, these can be overcome by providing a new school access off Brays Lane and part of the reserve land to the north of the school so that the core of the school does not become dispersed. Therefore neither of these constraints are insurmountable given that these proposals are considered in conjunction with residential development.

### The residential development (100 units) and the reserve school land

These two elements can not be considered in isolation as they are intrinsically linked. It is our considered view that the reserve school land could be provided either to the north of the school or split between land to the north of the school and on land to the east of Oxford Road. The residential development should be located to the north of the school (either extending as far as Brays Lane or further north).

It is recognised that the Council wishes to prevent new housing to the north of Brays Lane due to their concerns over the "lack of a defensible boundary" in this location. With this in mind, it is considered that residential development south of Brays Lane with the reserve land immediately to the north of the school is the preferred solution. This will enable the provision of a bus turning and waiting area and also a new school car park. Redevelopment of the existing car parking, which although somewhat dispersed, is well related to the existing school buildings, is then a possibility for the expansion of teaching space. Further reserve land can then be provided off Oxford Road for use as playing pitches as part of the future development at the South East Ashington broad location.

## Involvement

### The Council

As stated in the introduction to this document, this application is for up to 100 dwellings and follows an earlier application (ref: 10/000374/OUT) for a development to the north and south of Brays Lane which included up to 150 dwellings.

In preparing this revised application, we have worked closely with the Council and other Statutory Bodies. Given that the nature of the proposal is similar and that the area proposed for development has been decreased, a further public consultation exercise has not been undertaken. The initial consultation raised awareness regarding the general proposal for development in this broad location and also resulted in feedback which has been taken into consideration in the formulation of the proposals. It has been agreed with the District Council that it will not be necessary to undertake a further consultation exercise.

Many pre-application meetings have been held with both Development Control and Planning Policy officers. AMA has sought to take on board guidance from Council officers in shaping the proposals and in the production of the planning application documents.

AMA has also endeavoured to keep the Council informed with regard to amendments to the scheme during the design process.

### Specialist Consultants

In order to prepare a robust, workable scheme, a team of specialist consultants have been appointed to advise on the following matters:

- Flood Risk (Evans Rivers and Coastal)
- Transport (Intermodal)
- Biodiversity (AMEC and EECOS)
- Utilities (Ardent)
- Contamination (AMEC)
- Archaeology (Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit)
- Arboriculture (DF Clark)
- Landscape and Visual Impact (AMA)
- Health Impact (AMA)

### Statutory Bodies and Other Interested Parties

The proposals have had regard to the consultation responses which were received by the Council in relation to the previous application.

Both the Headmaster of The King Edmund School and also Blaise Gammie, School Organisation and Planning Strategic Officer at Essex County Council have been consulted throughout the design process to ensure that the schools needs and aspirations can be met.

### Public Consultation

Consultation was carried out in relation to the previous development proposals for a larger development of up to 150 dwellings on land to the north and to the south of Brays Lane, Rochford.

An exhibition was held at The King Edmund School, on Friday 23rd April 2010 from 3pm until 5pm, and also on Saturday 24th April 2010 from 9am until 1pm.

In order to publicise the event, leaflets were delivered (see Fig 10) to resident's homes that are closest to the site, and posters were requested to be displayed in a few local shops along Ashingdon Road.

The exhibition was informal in nature, with a series of exhibition boards outlining the proposals. The contents of the exhibition can be seen on the opposite page. Comments forms and evaluation sheets were provided and members of the public were encouraged to fill these out at the exhibition or send them by post within two weeks of the exhibition.

In total 114 members of the public attended the exhibition over the two days and of these, 38 people filled out a comments form. Letters were also sent to the local ward councillors, the local Parish Councils, the local MP and Council Officers in the planning department.



Figure 10: Public Consultation Leaflet

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### Summary of Public Comments

The primary concern of many of the exhibition attendees appears to be the extra traffic that will be generated by a new development on the proposed site. Many strongly believe that an increase in the number of people using the roads would have a negative impact on the surrounding area, adding to the existing pressure on local roads.

The traffic issues mainly concern Ashington Road, as this is the key route to main centres and roads for local residents. At peak times of the day, namely school starting and finishing times, many people commented that Ashington Road is extremely congested with extra traffic, school buses and students travelling by bicycle and on foot.

There was general concern regarding the impact the proposal would have on local facilities and services such as doctors, schools, gas, electricity and drainage.

There is support for the land proposed for the extension of the school, and also for the proposed new school access and dropping off point from Brays Lane. Residents living in Vaughan Close were particularly keen for the access to the King Edmund School via Sponsor Gardens and Vaughan Close to be removed if possible.

For full details of the consultation process see the Statement of Community Involvement report.



Figure 11: Public Consultation Photos



Figure 12: Public Consultation Boards

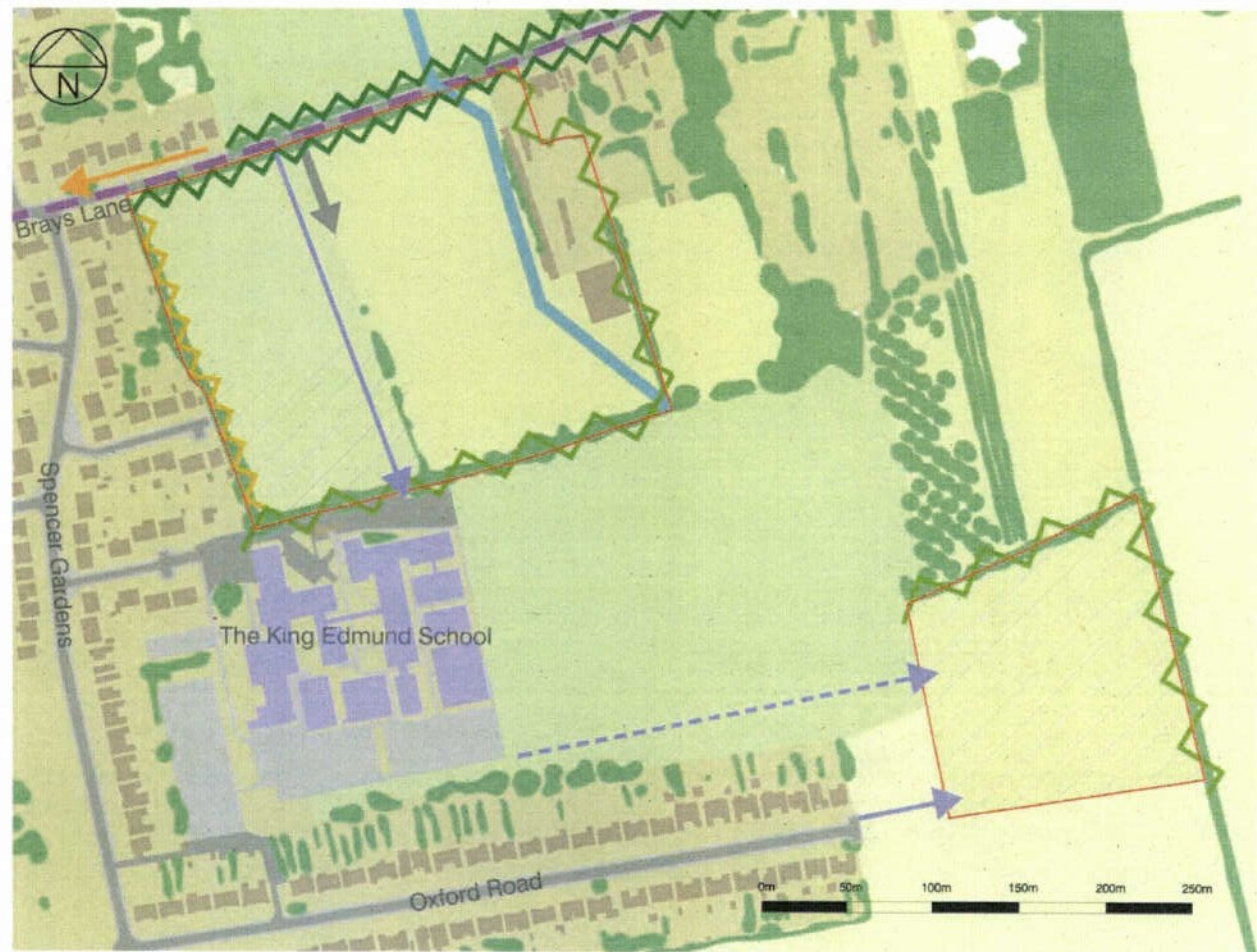
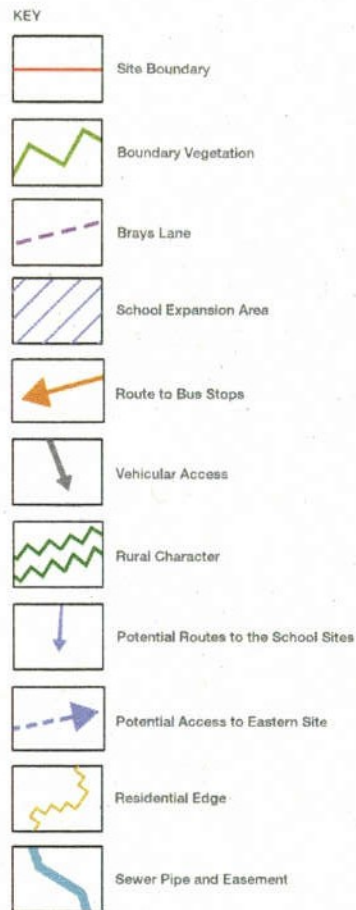


Figure 13: Opportunities and Constraints Plan



## Opportunities and Constraints

The assessment section of this statement has set out to analyse the physical, social, economic and policy context of the site and its surroundings and has taken into account discussions with the local authority and advice from specialist consultants.

In this section, those issues are interrogated further and defined as an opportunity or a constraint. Some are site specific whereas others are general points. The following aspects demonstrate that the principle of development within this particular site has many positives which can be taken advantage of. In contrast, there are also issues that will require mitigation or specific design solutions. Ultimately, the responses to these points will determine the principles of the proposed development.

### Opportunity to:

- satisfy the demand for housing within this district in the 5 year housing supply period;
- create a quality, sustainable development with an 'eco-friendly' philosophy;
- design attractive homes that are functional and integrate well with the street scene;
- create a layout that is permeable and allows for safe and easy movement for all modes of transport;
- provide a mix and choice of private and affordable housing;
- provide The King Edmund School with land for expansion;
- take direct vehicular access from Brays Lane (and Oxford Road if necessary);
- improve pedestrian and cycle safety (Brays Lane has no footpaths adjacent to the site at present);
- traffic calm Brays Lane and improve vehicular safety;
- create new safe routes to The King Edmund School;
- get development within reasonably flat and well contained land;
- retain and enhance existing boundary vegetation;
- provide development in close proximity to schools and local amenities; and
- provide development in close proximity to bus stops on Ashington Road.

### Constraint of:

- increased traffic on Brays Lane and impact on local road network;
- rural character of Brays Lane;
- established vegetation along Brays Lane;
- ditches along Brays Lane;
- telegraph poles and lines along Brays Lane;
- boundary abutting residential properties in places – potential change in character; and
- sewage pipeline and easement corridor – this must be kept clear of housing development and made accessible.

### Design

The previous section of this statement identified the opportunities and constraints of the site and its surroundings. The following pages demonstrate how these issues have been addressed and explain the rationale of the master plan.

In this section the broad parameters for the site are established before elaborating on the more detailed principles. This will be supported by site specific visuals along with images that will seek to capture the character of the proposal.

### Design Concept

The proposal has been designed to accommodate two elements:

- Expansion areas totalling 3.15ha for The King Edmund School capable of accommodating a drop-off loop road, bus stand for 12 buses, parking for up to 122 cars and two football pitches.
- 100 residential dwellings and associated gardens, parking, access roads, landscaping and open space.

The application site is bound on both the eastern and western boundaries by either residential development or vegetation. The northern side is defined by Brays Lane and the southern side by the boundary with The King Edmund School. Therefore in the first instance, the physical parameters of this part of the site have been determined by its boundaries.

The location of the eastern part of the site was chosen because of its adjacency to The King Edmund School. Access to it from Oxford Road was also a contributing factor. The northern and eastern sides are bound by existing vegetation. The size of the site and the southern and western boundaries were determined by the ability of the site to accommodate two football pitches.

The size and shape of both parcels as well as the existing boundary conditions have all contributed towards how the development blocks have been orientated and the direction of the building frontages. Blocks have been designed to provide adequate garden sizes, 'back to back' distances and parking spaces in line with the appropriate standards. These requirements seek to help new residents and those living in adjacent existing properties to experience sufficient light and privacy.

Another key factor shaping the concept is access. In particular, the location and arrangement of the access points and the requirement that The King Edmund School is served via the residential element of the proposal (see Section 6 for full details). The existence of a 875mm foul sewer pipeline running through the site also has a bearing on the concept. This pipeline requires a 3m easement corridor each side, with restrictions as to what can be placed over it.

The pages in this section describe in full how the concept plan shown below, has been developed into the illustrative master plan (see following pages). Although the master plan has been designed to a fine level of detail, the application is made in outline with all matters reserved. Therefore the master plan has been prepared to demonstrate how the proposal could look rather than how it will look.

### Amount

Following analysis of the sites potential in the Evaluation Section of this statement, it has been determined that this site would be suitable for the school expansion and for residential development. The size of the application site and the type and amount of development has been guided by:

- the location of the site;
- the boundary conditions;
- adjacency and requirements of The King Edmund School;
- access opportunities and constraints;
- viability of the development;
- housing need (including affordable housing);
- meeting the requirements of the related policies, standards and good practice; and
- open space and landscaping.



Figure 14: Concept Plan



Amount continued

#### School Expansion Element

A study of the potential school expansion sites was undertaken as part of the earlier application (ref: 10/000374/OUT) to establish the optimum location. The size and location of the preferred school expansion sites was determined by the following:

- Ability to accommodate a drop-off loop road, bus stand for 12 buses and area for car parking.
- Ability to accommodate two football pitches.
- Proximity to the school site.
- Means and ease of access.
- Least amount of constraints.
- Development limited to the south of Brays Lane.

The plan below shows how the components could be arranged within the expansion area:

- Drop-off loop road – the access road enters the site from Brays Lane and curves 90 degrees to the west. The loop has been designed to accommodate the movements of single and double decker school buses and will allow buses to loop around 180 degrees, re-join the access road and exit the site.

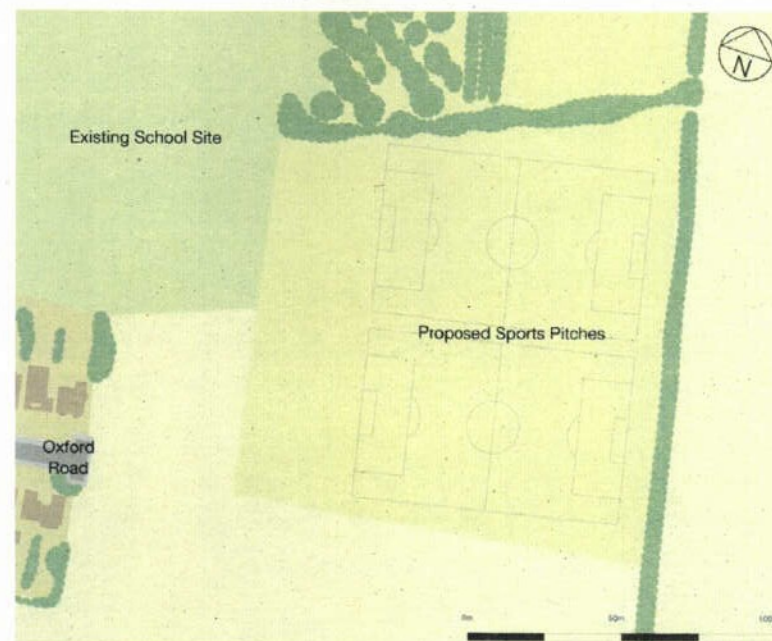
- Bus stand – the bus stand has been designed to accommodate 12 parked buses, which line up opposite the school boundary. This will allow students to get off the buses and walk safely into the school without having to cross traffic. The loop has also been designed to incorporate space for each bus to adequately reverse.
- Car park – the area identified for the car park has the ability to accommodate up to 122 cars. These spaces are intended to replace the numerous pockets of parking located within the school site so that the land can be released for new school facilities to be built.
- Footpaths – these will be provided within the school expansion area to offer safe movement for pedestrians. Students arriving by bus will be able to access the school directly without having to cross traffic. Footpath routes also lead from the car park and from Brays Lane into the school site.
- School vehicular access – a road will run from the loop into the schools existing northern car park. This will offer alternative vehicular access in this part of the school and could potentially remove school traffic from Vaughan Close.

#### KEY

	Site Boundary		Bus Stand
	Existing Residential Area		Proposed Car parking
	Roads and Car Parking		Pedestrian Route
	School Buildings		
	Existing Landscaping		
	Proposed Landscaping		



Figure 15: Illustrative Master Plan - School Expansion Element (Scale 1:1250 @ A3)





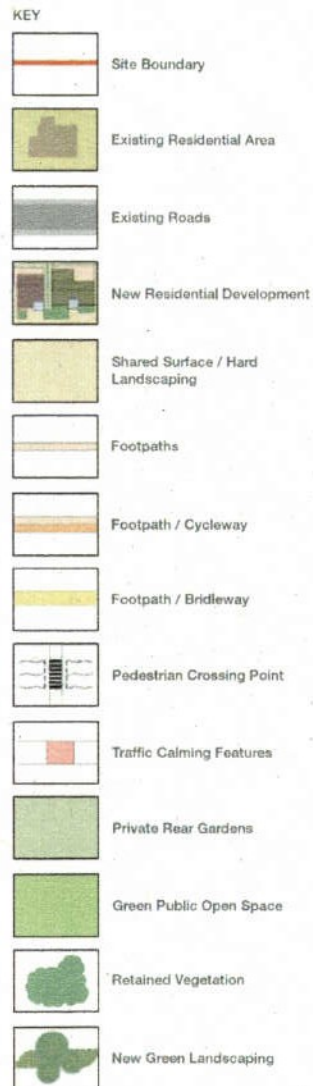


Figure 16: Illustrative Master Plan - Residential Element (Scale 1:1250 @ A3)

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**Amount continued****Residential Element**

After analysing the site's potential in the Evaluation Section of this statement, the amount of development considered to be sustainable and deliverable is 100 dwellings. The housing mix, as identified in Policy H5 of the Council's Core Strategy, will contain a mix of dwelling types to ensure that it caters for the local housing need. The master plan (opposite) indicates how the development could look and is based on a mix of:

- 40 two bed dwellings (40%)
- 40 three bed dwellings (40%)
- 20 four bed dwellings (20%)

This mix is for illustrative purposes only and can be amended to reflect market demand and the Council's requirements. Within this mix will be an element of 36% affordable housing as set out in the Council's Core Strategy. The Council have identified that their current need for affordable units would be for a mix of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom properties and this can be incorporated into the illustrative masterplan.

It would not be appropriate to fix the mix at this stage. The final mix will be a matter for the housing developer and Council to agree at a later date.

The affordable dwellings have been designed so that the net floorspaces reflect RSL standards. These dwellings will more than likely be split up as socially rented (80%) and intermediate (20%) housing, as advocated by the Council's Housing Strategy Team.

The standards for elements of the design such as gardens and car parking have been applied as prescribed by the local authority. In particular the following documents have been used as a guide:

- Rochford District Council Supplementary Planning Document 2 – Housing Design (January 2007)
- Rochford District Council Supplementary Planning Document 5 – Vehicle Parking Standards (January 2007)
- Rochford District Council Supplementary Planning Document 7 – Design, Landscaping and Access Statements (January 2007)
- Essex County Council – The Essex Design Guide for Residential and Mixed Use Areas (November 2005)
- Essex County Council Parking Standards – Design and Good Practice (September 2009)

The type and amount of open space within the development has been based on the objectives, principles and standards that are set out in PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (DCLG, July 2002).

Access into the site and requirement that The King Edmund School be expanded and served (as set out in Policy CLT3 of the Council's Core Strategy) has limited the amount of housing proposed for the site. The desire to retain as much vegetation along Brays Lane thus preserving its rural character has also had an impact on the capacity of the site.

The site is located on the edge of Rochford, on high ground and in close proximity to low density residential development. For these reasons, the proposal incorporates dwellings with a building height of 2 storeys maximum. Although this will be slightly different in character to the adjacent housing areas, it strikes a balance between responding to context and making an efficient use of land. Although there are no longer national minimum standards for housing density, the proposal accords with the longstanding minimum requirement of 30dph that was abolished last year, which sought to resist lower density development in order to ensure effective use of land.

The amount, type and density of residential development proposed are therefore deemed suitable, taking into account the issues listed above.

**Scale**

As mentioned previously, the proposal will consist of buildings that are 2 storeys in height. These buildings will be between 5m and 5.5m high to the eaves and between a further 2.5m to 3m high to the ridge. Building depths range between 5.5m and 9m and widths between 5m and 10m.

The ratio between building heights and the distance between frontages will ensure that streets are comfortably enclosed. Building features such as door and window openings will also be to a human scale. The building widths and depths will also create sensibly sized, usable plots that avoid long and narrow rear gardens.

Massing of the development will be more concentrated in some places than in others. For example where visual impact needs to be minimised, built form will be set back with a broken up frontage. In less sensitive places development can be denser with a more continuous edge.

The development blocks have been designed to comfortably accommodate gardens and car parking internally whilst providing adequate security and privacy. Externally, the sizes of the blocks allow for high levels of permeability, especially for pedestrians.



Right: 3D Overview of proposal from the east looking along Brays Lane towards Rockford.

Above: Street level perspective of a typical street scene within the residential element of the proposal



Figure 17: Master Plan Overview and Perspectives

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### Layout

The size and shape of the site along with the various constraints that exist have had an impact on the layout of the master plan. The junction access design provided by Intermodal Transportation dictates the type and location of access into the site and is also designed to provide new access to The King Edmund School.

### School Access

The school access road effectively splits this side of the site in two. The functional requirement of the road i.e. being used primarily as a school drop-off means that this stretch will need to remain relatively free from obstruction. For this reason, development facing parallel to the road is served via a separate road network. This will not only ensure that cars are not parked on the road but will provide a buffer for adjacent dwellings thus enhancing their setting. Cars parked at these properties will also be able to reverse onto the road without the need to worry about school traffic and passing children during peak times.

### Sewer Easement

The alignment of the foul sewer pipeline running through both sides of the site has influenced where buildings are placed. Guidance provided by Ardent Consulting Engineers indicated that the pipeline could be placed underneath roads or left to run through open space, with restrictions on planting distances. The layout has been designed to take into account this advice, with roads running along the alignment. This strategy complies with the easement requirement for a pipe of this size and type and will allow access for maintenance in the public realm.

### Brays Lane

The desire to preserve the character of Brays Lane has informed the style of development running parallel to it. Existing vegetation will be retained where possible and augmented where necessary. Clearly, vegetation will need to be removed for the construction of the junction and to provide adequate visibility. However, the verges running along this part of the development will be planted with similar species to help provide continuity along Brays Lane. This planting will continue further into the site, lining the route to the school expansion area.

The housing facing onto Brays Lane will be set back behind the vegetation and served via a series of low-trafficised, shared surface lanes. This will help to limit the visual impact of cars parked or travelling within the development. Housing here will be mainly detached or semi-detached. These aspects of the design will create a similar building line and set back which currently exists along Brays Lane.

### Pedestrian Movement

Safe and easy movement through the site will be of high importance bearing in mind the proposed school drop-off. A new footpath has been designed to run alongside Brays Lane where at present there is no provision. This footpath is set back from the highway and separated by a line of new planting. This arrangement offers a safe pedestrian route that is well overlooked by residential frontage.

The Brays Lane footpath leads directly into the site and towards the school. At the southern end of the site there will be an alternative entrance allowing pedestrian access into the existing school site. Where pedestrian routes cross a highway a change in level and surface material will be used to calm traffic. All routes are well overlooked. These measures will seek to offer safe routes to school for children.

Around the school drop-off area there is a network of footpaths designed to make movement safe. Footpath routes lead into the school at the eastern and western ends, the latter offers a route directly from the car park. To the south of the bus stand there is a pedestrian area where students can get off the buses and enter the school directly without having to cross any roads.

The residential layout has been designed to offer a choice of routes along key desire lines. A footpath running diagonally through the public open space will allow easier movement between the south eastern corner of the site and Brays Lane. Areas of shared space located throughout the scheme will also help to make pedestrian movement safer.

### Open Space

The open space is provided in one location, central to the development. This green space is defined and enclosed by housing with frontage facing on to it, providing good natural surveillance (see below). The green will offer informal recreational space with the opportunity to provide a small area for seats and equipped play. Tree planting along the edge and within the space will help to break the space up and enhance its appearance (for more details see landscape pages of this statement).



### Urban Design

In general the layout adheres to sound urban design principles. The scheme has been designed so that rear and sides of new housing abut parts of the site boundary that are adjacent to existing residential plots. This will seek to minimise loss of privacy. Housing will also abut the boundary between the development and the school expansion area.

Elsewhere, frontages will face onto the public realm providing enclosed and overlooked streets (see below). This development will be formed by perimeter blocks that have the public sides (the fronts) facing outwards, and the private sides (the backs) placed inside the block. The street geometry generated by these blocks roughly runs from north to south and east to west, reflecting the predominant patterns of the existing residential areas. However these patterns have been enhanced through the use of smaller blocks which provide better permeability for pedestrians.



Where possible, the blocks have also been orientated to maximise the amount of south facing development. In any case each house will be orientated to make the most of natural light and heat from the sun (for more details see sustainability and appearance pages of this statement).

### Boundary Treatments

Building thresholds will contrast depending on their location within the development. For example, houses facing onto Brays Lane and those leading into the southern side of the development will be set back, incorporating low hedges, railings and brick walls. These edge treatments are similar to those existing on Brays Lane and will help to provide continuity along the road.

Along other roads within the scheme, set backs will be limited to no more than 0.5m. This will ensure that development encloses the street whilst allowing properties to enjoy a small private threshold between front doors and windows and the footpath. Edge treatments to properties served by areas of shared surface will vary. Those fronting Brays Lane or facing onto open spaces will have a soft landscaped setting. In other places, frontage will be set directly onto the shared surface creating tight squares and streets.



### Sustainability

The proposal will seek to comply with Code Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. The minimum standards required to achieve this are set out in the Code for Sustainable Homes – A step-change in sustainable home building practice (DCLG, December 2009).

This document states that these homes will have to be 25% more energy efficient than the standards set out in the 2006 Building Regulations. This could be achieved by:

- Improving the thermal efficiency of the walls, windows and roof e.g. more insulation or better glass.
- Installing a high efficiency condensing boiler.
- Using low and zero carbon technologies such as solar thermal panels or biomass boilers to help heat hot water.

Each home will have to use no more than 105 litres of water per person per day. This could be achieved by installing:

- A dual flush WC.
- Flow reducing taps and showers.
- A smaller shaped bath.
- Limited volume dishwashers and washing machines.

Other enhancements to the home could include:

- Sufficient drying space for washing (to reduce the use of tumble dryers).
- Energy efficient lighting.
- Cycle storage.
- Space for home working.
- Convenient recycling arrangements.
- Enhanced security.
- Enhanced sound insulation.

Other minimum requirements for the development in general include:

- Surface water management – provision of soakaways and porous paving.
- Materials – to meet at least a 'D' grade in the BRE's Green Guide.
- Waste management – adequate space for waste storage.

Figure 18: Typical Dwelling Sketch

Note – these labels indicate what eco-friendly features could be incorporated and how they contribute towards a more contemporary style of building. A traditional style of building can still achieve Code Level 3.

### Potential Compliance with Code Level 3

The principles of the development along with the layout and building forms (see sketch below) have been designed to take these requirements into account.

The master plan has been arranged to maximise the potential of the sun, with buildings orientated so that fronts of rear face south. Roofscapes have been designed so that a greater area is facing the sun allowing opportunities for roof lights. Where appropriate, balconies and vertical glazing elements can also be incorporated. These features will provide more daylight into each home, which can reduce the need for artificial lighting and create passive solar gain, which can reduce the need for space heating. Over-heating and glare can be resolved through good ventilation and shading features. Roof areas can additionally provide room for photovoltaic modules which convert solar radiation into electricity and solar panels which are used for heating water.

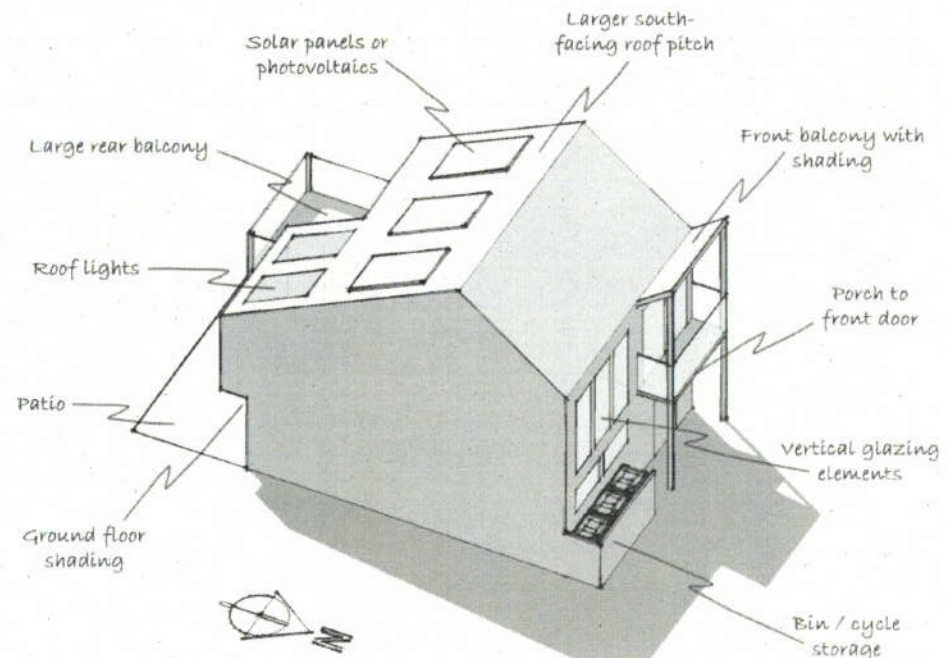
Roofs can also be used for rainwater harvesting. This grey water can then be collected and used in washing machines and for flushing WCs. In its simplest form it can be stored in a water butt and used to irrigate rear gardens. Each dwelling within the development will be provided with a patio area. These areas will be built with porous materials which will help to drain surface water.

Each dwelling will be designed to incorporate adequate internal sorting and external storage space for refuse and recycling material. The lack of such facilities in the local area has led to an assortment of bins being left out on the roadside on collection day. The buildings all have integrated storage areas and the plot arrangements are designed to make transfer of such waste from rear to front convenient. For those dwellings without a garage, external cycle storage will also be integrated into the building design.

All plots will be designed to include adequate gardens sizes and meet the standards set out in the council's relevant policy. These gardens will offer a secure environment for children's play, drying of laundry and where possible provide a private area that is not overlooked. Sheds and composting facilities could also be provided.

For those larger properties with detached garages, there is an opportunity for a first floor home office facility. These can be reached via a small outer staircase within the rear garden. On a smaller scale, provision of space within the dwelling itself can be made.

Ultimately, energy efficiency will be based on improving the fabric of each dwelling. This means that materials and construction techniques will focus on reducing heat loss through roofs, walls, floors, doors and windows. Materials and finishing elements should also be responsibly sourced.





### Appearance

The inspiration behind the appearance of the scheme and use of materials is based on the requirement to achieve at least Code Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. The urban character assessment of the local neighbourhoods revealed no consistent or suitable vernacular type to guide new development, so the appearance is based around a more eco-friendly philosophy.

The standards set out on the opposite page can contribute towards the appearance of each building and the choice of material used. For example these measures may determine the roof size and orientation, the size and location of windows, the addition of balconies, features that provide shading and storage for bins and cycles (see below).

This picture (right) is an example of bin storage (coloured blue) integrated into the building, a solution which will help to reduce clutter seen in local streets (below).

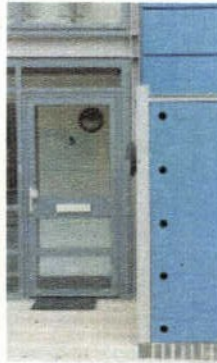


Figure 18 (opposite page) demonstrates some other possible eco-friendly features that may influence the appearance of a dwelling. The montage (right) includes some inspirational images that indicate how the development could look and what features and materials could be incorporated. Figure 20 shows a typical street elevation.

Note – the appearance of the scheme is indicative only and the layout has been designed to accommodate a traditional style of housing as well as a more contemporary type.

Figure 19:  
Appearance  
and Materials  
Montage

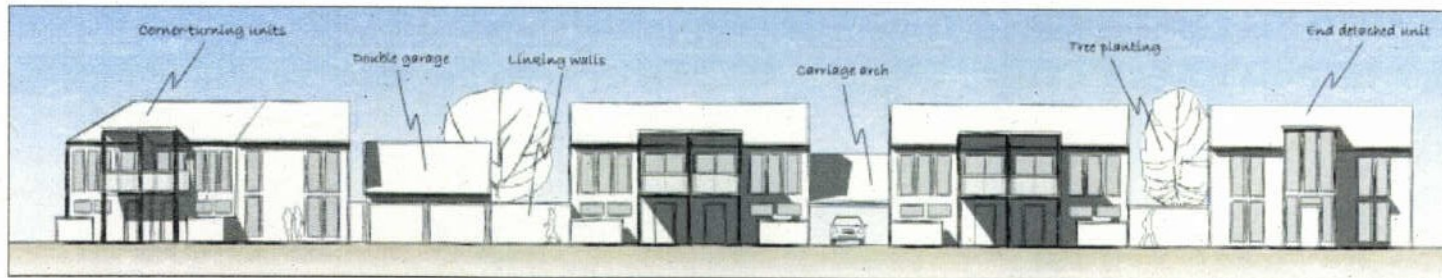
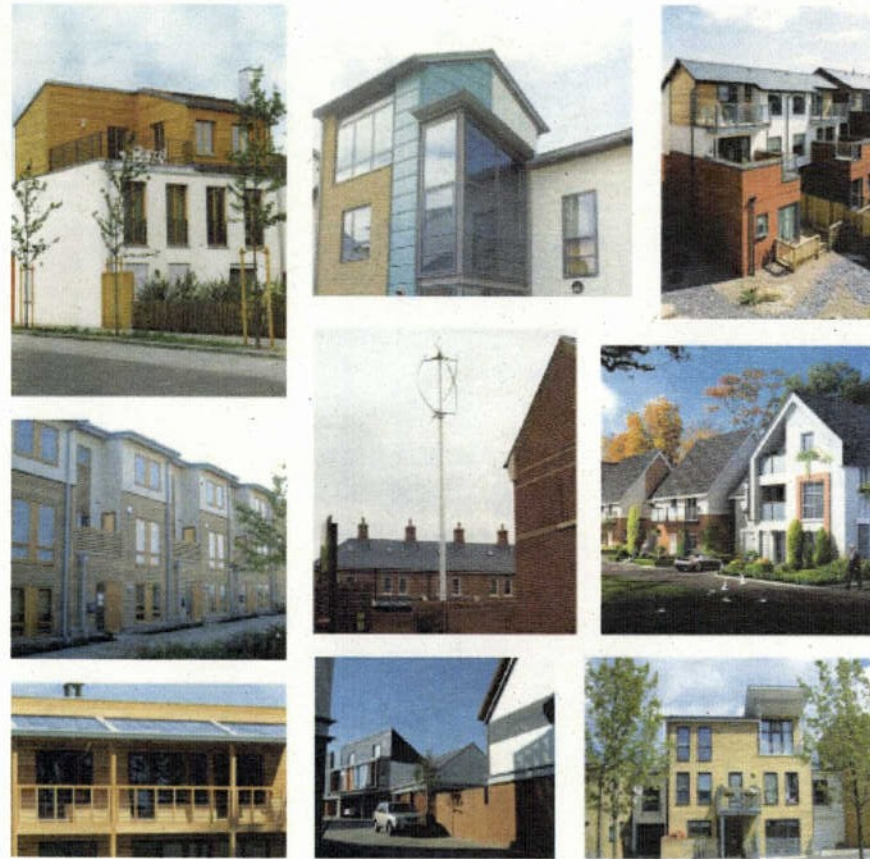


Figure 20: Typical Street Elevation





Figure 21: Landscape Plan (Scale 1:1250 @ A3)



## Landscape

### Landscaping Strategy and Open Space Framework

The landscape strategy looks to incorporate the existing landscaping features into the proposed development. Using native species and utilising the vernacular landscape, such as existing hedgerows and woodland; to gently embed the proposal into the surrounding context.

Seeking to enhance the integrity of the landscape through proposed tree planting and hedgerow management, the proposals aim to create a visually aesthetic treatment, that enhances the ecological benefits found and maximising the green infrastructure within the urban form.

### Main Area of Public Open Space

The main area of public open space is partially enclosed on all sides with large scale street trees to be under-planted with naturalised bulbs and meadow grass. Adjacent properties overlook the central green providing natural surveillance. The open space includes provision for natural child play and a shelter for youths; these play spaces will look to create positive design features within the space encouraging a wide range of uses.

### General Landscaping

The landscape proposal looks to soften the edges of the built form with the addition of strategically placed street trees and ornamental shrub planting helping to create a quality setting. The successional planting and seasonal change achieved by the proposed tree and shrub planting will raise local awareness encouraging stewardship and pride in local surroundings.

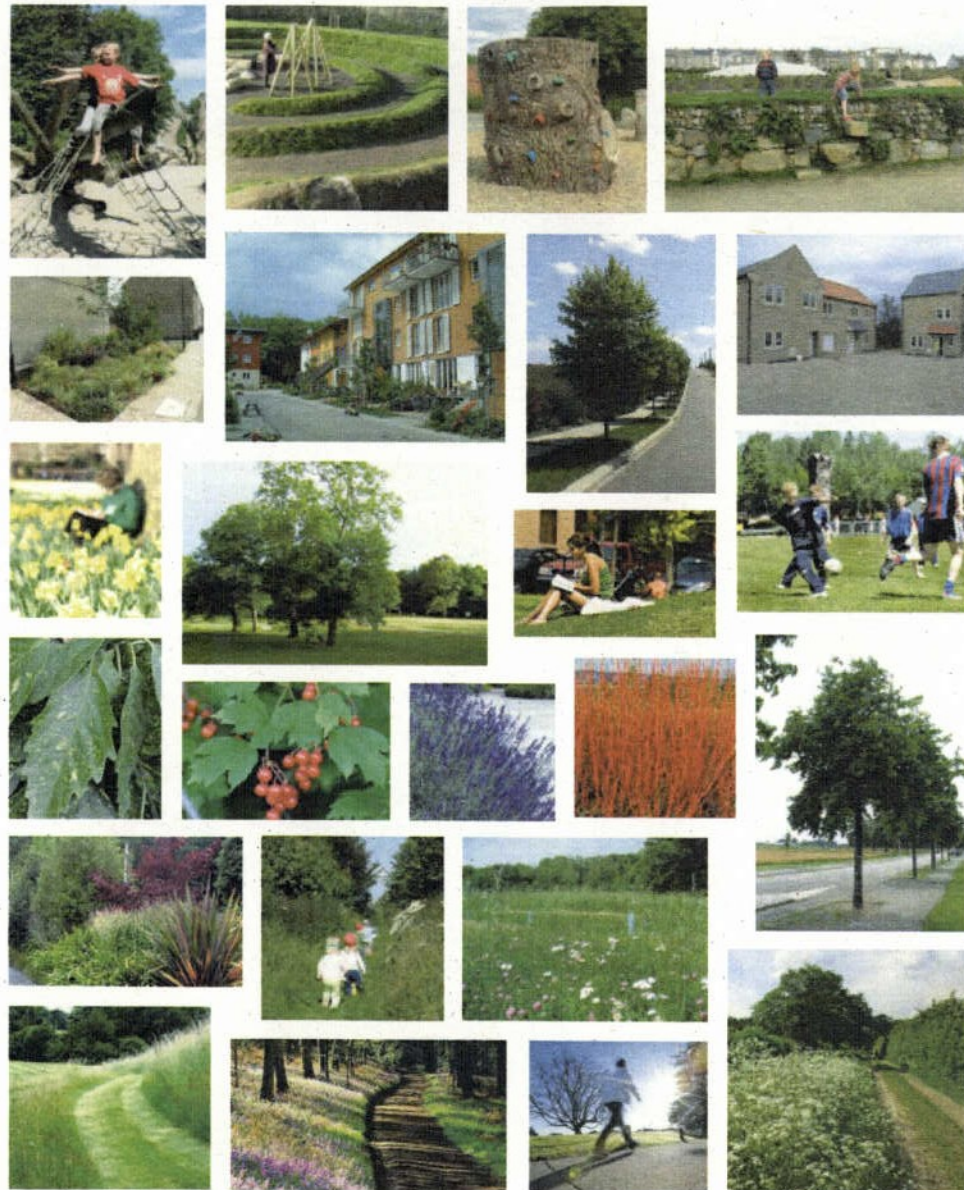


Figure 22: Illustrative Landscape Treatment Examples



### Community Safety and Crime Prevention

The layout of the scheme will promote community safety and help to reduce crime. Access to the scheme and the routes within have been designed to offer choice and convenience without compromising security.

The public realm will be well defined with building 'fronts' facing the street. In some instances buildings are designed to 'turn the corner', maintaining a frontage on two sides. Flank ends that face the street will be designed with windows in the façade. Where possible, entrances to garages and parking courts will be via carriage arch. This will help to maintain a continuous building line. Properties will be linked and gardens enclosed by high brick walls, softened by trees planted within each plot. These principles will ensure that streets are well overlooked and continuously defined to emphasize the difference between public and private space.

Development blocks will assist in maintaining security by creating a perimeter, with the private zone inside the block. Here gardens and parking should only be accessible to residents. Private gardens will be enclosed by high brick walls and parked cars overlooked from the rear of dwellings. Security of the existing properties around the edge of the site will also be enhanced by the scheme. New development will abut such boundaries thus forming a buffer along what was once exposed to open fields.

All key movement routes such as the one to The King Edmund School along with all open spaces will be lined by development and therefore well overlooked. Natural surveillance will provide safer connections for pedestrians and will allow open spaces to be policed by residents. All pedestrian routes will also be well lit at night. All landscaping and provision for play and congregation will be specified to be safe, easily maintained and well managed in order to discourage crime and anti-social behaviour.

The development will seek to provide a home for a new community of people, extending and enhancing a well established neighbourhood. By creating an attractive and inviting place, a sense of ownership and responsibility will develop amongst residents which will help to promote a safe, respected environment.

### Drainage

The Flood Risk Assessment prepared by Evans Rivers and Costal has considered the practical use of sustainable drainage techniques. As the soil types across the site are unlikely to support the effective use of deep infiltration devices such as soakaways, alternative methods of surface water disposal have been investigated.

- Surface water from driveways and roof areas across the proposed site could be drained via pervious surfaces. During the 1 in 100 year plus climate change event, there would be no excess surface water residing across the pervious surfaces. Surface water would be temporarily stored by the pervious surface and discharged to other SUDS features across the site.

- Surface water draining from the pervious surfaces and access roads could be conveyed to the lower parts of the site via a swale and/or pipe network. This would allow for some infiltration and attenuation of surface water and would provide further cleansing of surface water, by removing some pollutants and suspended solids.

- The surface water conveyed by the swale or pipe network could discharge into a detention basin (see plan below) which would be designed up to the climate change 1 in 100 year event. The basin would allow some additional infiltration of surface water; however, the surface water flows and volumes would be attenuated in the basin and released into the local public sewer network. The basin would remain generally dry during periods of little or no rainfall.

For more details see Flood Risk Assessment

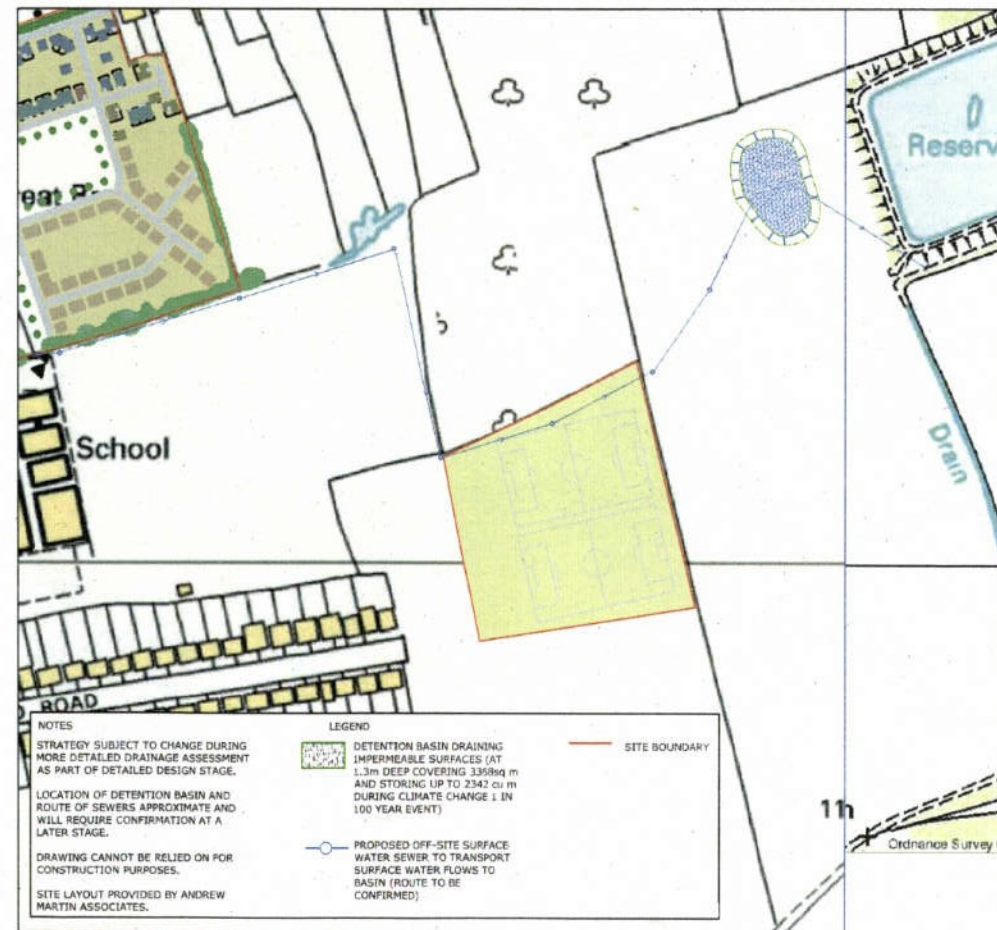


Figure 23: SUDS Strategy Plan



### Foul Water and Services

A foul water and services statement was produced by Ardent Consulting Engineers to determine whether the proposed development could be supported. The conclusions of their enquiries are set out below:

- Information received from Connect Utilities indicates the proposed development can be served with a gas supply.
- EDF and Connect Utilities indicate that the proposed development can be served with an electrical supply.
- Suffolk and Essex Water notes that sufficient capacity exists within the water supply network to serve the proposed development.
- Similarly, Anglian Water indicates that the public foul network contains sufficient capacity to serve the development.
- Sufficient depth exists within the public foul sewer to provide a gravity connection.
- British Telecom has advised that cost estimates will only be provided once the proposed development has received planning approval.
- Due to the proximity of existing BT apparatus to the proposed development site, it is anticipated that BT connections can be provided.
- Virgin Media does not currently operate a service in the Rochford area and as such are unable to service the proposed development in telecommunications terms.

Based upon the information received, it is evident that the proposed development can be supported in infrastructure terms with regard to foul water disposal and utility supply.

For more details see Foul Water and Services Statement

### Biodiversity

A site walkover survey was conducted on the 18 March 2010 and by an experienced AMEC Earth & Environmental ecologist. A desk study was also conducted in which wildlife records were reviewed and information concerning designated nature conservation sites was gathered.

The desk study found there to be two designated wildlife sites within the search area of the site: Magnolia Local Nature Reserve and Doggetts Pond Local Wildlife Site. Both these sites are considered too distant to be adversely impacted by the proposals, and therefore no further recommendations are given.

Parts of the site are considered to provide suitable habitat for common native reptiles and great crested newts. Further surveys will be or have been carried out in order to determine likely impacts and to inform mitigation measures if necessary.

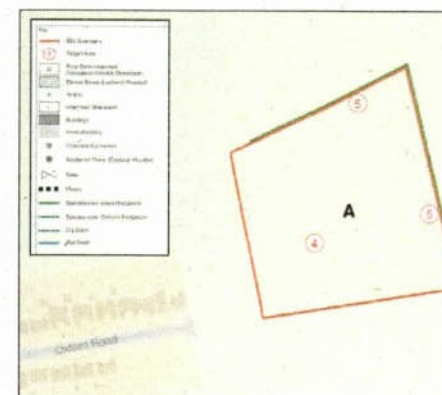
All of the trees, hedgerows and scrub have the potential to be used by nesting birds. Vegetation cleared during the nesting season will be checked for breeding birds immediately prior to any clearance works by a suitably trained and experienced ecologist.

Several trees along the boundaries of the site are considered to have the potential to be used by roosting bats. Trees with a low to medium potential for roosting bats will be impacted by the development proposals. Therefore reasonable avoidance measures will be put in place although no further survey of these trees is considered necessary. The trees identified as having a high potential for roosting bats (those on the eastern boundary of the northern area) will not be impacted. Any lighting incorporated into the scheme will be directed away from these trees. If any of these trees are impacted then dedicated surveys may then be necessary.

For more details see Biodiversity Report.



Figure 24: Phase 1 Habitat Survey Plan



### Trees

During the construction build phase adequate provision will be made for the protection of existing trees on site. This will include:

- Tree protective fencing;
- That those parts of the tree protection zone (TPZ) that cannot be protected by fencing are clearly marked to make operatives aware; and
- The specific location of services where possible to avoid excavations within root protection areas or if necessary to be undertaken by supervised hand dig only.

Foundation depth and design will be in accordance with NHBC 'Building near Trees'. A copy of the report, including the site specific method statements and tree protection plan will be kept on site at all times. Arboricultural supervision at critical stages will be conditioned.

For more details see Tree Report.

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### Highways

The site is suitably located to take advantage of a regular bus service within 400m of the site. Given that it would be possible to walk and cycle to many local community facilities including the local schools, the site is considered to be located in a suitable position to promote alternative means of transport for short day to day trips and use of the bus to access the mainline railway station is very likely for commuters reliant on the rail network to reach their workplaces. It is therefore concluded that the development for 100 houses on the site is capable of being facilitated with the implementation of identified off site highway improvements, or the offer of an appropriate contribution towards transportation infrastructure improvements, such that the development should be regarded as acceptable from a highway and transportation perspective.

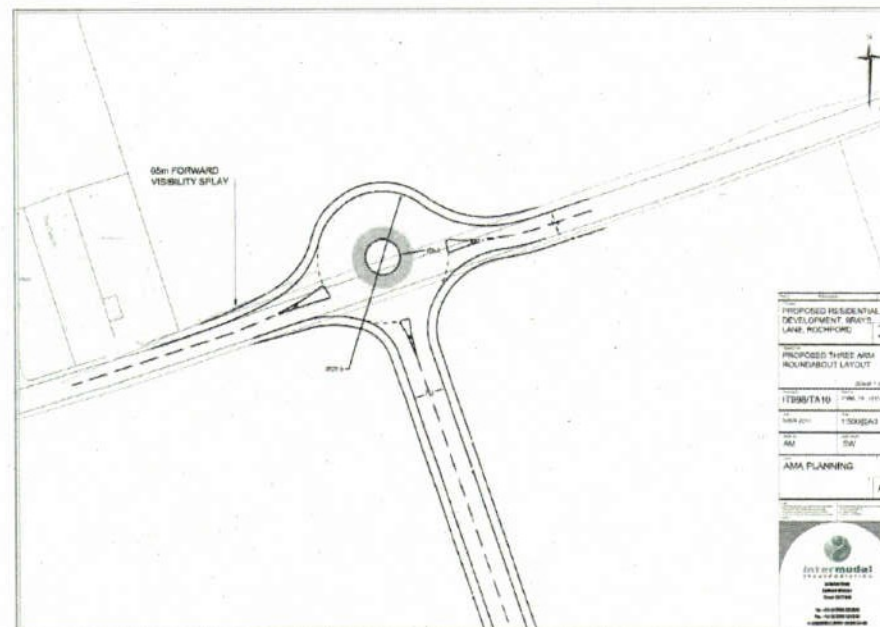


Figure 25: Junction Options and Bus Drop-off (previous option)



## Access

### Movement Network

The proposed scheme seeks to create new connections and improve movement around the site (see plan, below right). For pedestrians, there is now a footpath running alongside Brays Lane with a cycleway incorporated (see below). This is set back from the road and overlooked by frontage. From here, pedestrian routes lead directly into the school site.

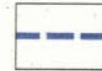


To the south, a new bus drop-off and car park is proposed to serve The King Edmund School. The loop will take bus movements away from Oxford Road, Sparrow Gardens and Vaughan Close, relieving their residents of the associated noise and congestion. There is also potential to move all vehicular movements away from these roads and redirect them into the school via the bus drop-off. Access can be made to proposed and existing car parking whilst delivery vehicles could also use this route to access the school. Pedestrian movement will also be channelled alongside the drop-off as well as being retained along Vaughan Close.

Access to the new sports pitches will be possible from within the existing school site. Students will be able to walk along the southern boundary of the school to reach the pitches. Pedestrian access may also be possible from the end of Oxford Road which could also provide access to maintenance vehicles.

Brays Lane will be easily accessible to pedestrians from all parts of the development. From here, the bus stops on Ashington Road are just 3 minutes walk away. The Golden Cross parade of shops take around 5 minutes to walk to whereas the town centre can be easily reached by bus or bicycle.

### KEY



Key Pedestrian Routes



Cycleway



Access to Pitches



Bus Drop-off



Potential Parking and Service / Maintenance Access



Route to Bus Stops



Figure 26: Access and Movement Plan



KEY	
S	Hard Landscaped Square
L	Shared Surface Lane
M	Mews Court
P	Communal Parking Courts
→	Access to Parking Courts
	Traffic Calming Features



Figure 27: Streets and Parking Plan (Scale 1:1250 @ A3)



## Access

### Residential Streets

Vehicular access into the site is taken from Brays Lane. As indicated previously in this statement, the site will provide access to The King Edmund School. This part of the road will therefore be constructed for the movements of school buses but designed to calm traffic along a route that will be used by many children.

The residential development itself will be served via a network of access roads and shared surface lanes (see plan, opposite). The access roads will be the primary vehicular routes, serving the more concentrated areas of development. In contrast, the shared surface lanes serve a limited number of dwellings predominantly on one side only and are designed for minimal traffic movements. Footpath and carriageway are not defined creating a space for all modes of transport to use (see below).



Access road junctions are also treated as shared surface areas. These nodes are where all modes of transport converge and change direction. By treating them as hard landscape spaces, these intersections will emphasise priority for pedestrians and will make drivers slow down and become more considerate on approach.



All access roads will be designed with appropriate kerb and centre-line radii in order to provide safe visibility splays and adequate stopping sight distances. They will also be designed with suitable turning heads. Good connectivity is essential in providing a choice of routes and allowing access for refuse and emergency vehicles. The shared surface lanes, although designed for low traffic levels, provide loops that increase connectivity and reduce the number of turning heads. Shorter mews type arrangements will again be designed with suitable turning areas.

### Car Parking

Parking typologies will be varied and will include on-plot spaces and garages, on-street and communal spaces set in courtyards. A parking court will serve no more than four dwellings and will be easily accessible and overlooked. Some courtyards and on-plot parking will be accessed via carriage arches (see below), used to help maintain a continuous building line. Garages will either be set back no more than 0.5m or greater than 6m from the back of the footpath. This will help to avoid inappropriate parking that can create obstructions in the street. Parking spaces adjacent to walls or buildings will have an extra 1m width to allow for easy entry and exit to and from a vehicle.



### Inclusive Access

All movement routes and buildings will be designed to be inclusive. The proposal will seek to remove barriers that lead to exclusion maximising access for all, regardless of age or ability. Accessibility will be designed into all design features with the aim of creating an environment that will offer freedom and choice. For example surface gradients will be safe and usable with a level transition between different surfaces and to building entrances. Buildings should also be designed for life-long use, with features that allow them to be adaptable and diverse (for more details see sustainability page of this statement).





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### Conclusion

The application site adjoins the urban edge and lies in close proximity to a range of services and facilities. Bus stops and local facilities lie within walking distance of the site and the town centre and railway station are only 1.5 miles away and can be easily reached by bus or cycle.

This document demonstrates that the site has been carefully assessed and many factors have been taken into account in designing the scheme. Specialist consultants have been appointed to advise on a range of matters and local residents, council officers and members and other interested parties have had the opportunity to comment on and shape the proposals.

The scheme offers considerable benefits to the school and the local community. The new housing will provide a valuable contribution towards housing supply and affordable housing in particular. The housing development will also enable considerable enhancements to the King Edmund Secondary School with the new access and the ability to accommodate new facilities, when they are required. Such improvements are not possible at other Secondary Schools in the District.

